



Oral History and Folklife Research, Inc.

AN INTERVIEW WITH VANESSA MUNSEY

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

KEITH LUDDEN

BIDDEFORD, ME
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TRANSCRIBER: KEITH LUDDEN

FINAL

[**Note:** Ms. Munsey's speech is difficult to decipher in some places and there is a certain amount of guesswork and interpolation in this transcript. Parentheses () generally indicate vocal sounds or words that appear to be unintelligible. Brackets [] indicate interpolations based on context or best guesses. They are also used to indicate editing comments from the transcriber. There is an aide in the room who facilitates some communication].

Keith Ludden: Okay, we are in Biddeford and we are at the home of Vanessa Munsey. Am I pronouncing that correctly?

Vanessa Munsey (Affirmative)

KJL: and we're talking about her life both in and out of an institution. Vanessa, do you mind if I ask when you were born?

VM: I was born in Wiscasset.

KJL: You were born in Wiscasset.

VM: Yes

KJL: And when was that?

VM: Hmmm?

Aide: 10-30-30. October 30, 1930

VM: 1930

KJL: And do you mind if you put the pen down, because that may make noise with the microphone.

VM: Okay.

KJL: So you were born in Wiscasset in 1930, is that right?

VM: (Affirmative)

KJL: Okay, great. I'm just going to check some levels here. Okay, yeah. What were your parents like?

VM: The state took me away from my mom, my real mom. Put me in the foster home in Washington—Washington, Maine. [Their] names Ada and Wilber (inaudible) and I would grow up there. At nineteen I went in the prison called Pineland. I went there. It was the worst place I've ever been to. A while later my brother went there. We had visit hours to visit him. Somebody picked up a chair and threw it at him and hurt his leg and he couldn't move or anything. And they got me all drugged up and the woman working in the dining room, she wanted me to help her out and I said, "No, I won't." (Inaudible) This aide come took me down the stairs and [wet? ripped?] my dress and they treat me like a wild animal. If you don't get up at roll call they put you in the other bed until you get up. They treat you like a crazy person. They [take you to] a dentist and they're going to take your teeth out without freezing them, and I'll tell you that's the worst place you've ever been into. My brother and I were very close and [what] they did to my brother, and I'll tell you then it would find them and pick up a chair and throw it at them.

[Handling noise, making an adjustment in the recorder]

KJL: When did you leave your parents' home?

VM: When I was nineteen years old I went into Pineland. I lived there every day until I come out. I had a good friend, Paige, she (inaudible) institution. And she helped us out. And they don't want the kids and the babies—they don't want them, they just stick them in there, and I'll tell you that's the worst place you've ever been into. The biggest problem—Paige [Barton] was in the hospital and she come and I never speak up for myself at all. We got in the state of Maine in Augusta and [teach] what we went through and if you don't like it, all they can say is "No." And I said, "Paige, help us." (inaudible) life and everything. And I tell you they close. And one day we all get together and we (inaudible) and helped close the place down. I went down to visit the place and I was at the big kitchen where I used to work and I thought in my mind—all over—my mind just—I couldn't bring my brother's timeline but I said take that thing down, I couldn't take it any more, when I go to bed (inaudible) and I look at the pictures and all, I saw Pineland and I [said], "Take that thing down." and I put my birthday picture up, and I got the timeline right there.

KJL: The timeline behind me here?

Yeah.

KJL: Okay.

VM: Yep, that's my timeline.

KJL: Okay.

VM: And that's all my friends right there.

KJL: Okay, great. So you left your home in Wiscasset when you were nineteen. Is that right?

VM: Yeah, nineteen going up there, and then my foster parents when I was nineteen years old. I was (inaudible) young when I went to my foster parents here. (Inaudible)

KJL: Why did you leave your home in Wiscasset?

VM: Wiscasset?

KJL: (Affirmative)

VM: My mama couldn't take care of me, that's all. The state put me in a foster home, and I called them Ada and Wilmer Putnam. They're here.

KJL: And who are Ada and Wilmer?

VM: My foster parents. And when my foster dad passed away, they put me in the institution, and that's the worst place you've every been to.

KJL: Tell me a little bit more about what your home in Wiscasset was like.

VM: I don't even know where Wiscasset is, because the state took me away from there.

KJL: You don't remember it?

VM: No. I know I was born there, because I don't know who my real father is. My mother couldn't take care [of me] because she lived in a boarding home, 'cause she couldn't take care of [me] and I went to that—moved with these people here.

KJL: When you lived with Wilbur and Ada, where was that? That was in Washington?

VM: Washington, Maine, yes.

KJL: And what was it like with them?

VM: Good. I go to school [every time]. They never struck us, they never had us—they would scold us, that's what they did.

KJL: They had what?

VM: They had what?

VM: They never struck us or anything. And the school, the girls wanted to come up to the house, and I didn't tell my parent I was going and we went up there playing (inaudible). I said, "I gotta get home." And I was in those woods—no houses anywhere, just woods, and I said, "I gotta get home (inaudible name)'s gonna get you. (Inaudible) and the dog chases, I'm in my heels. And I (inaudible) been. (Inaudible) come right over, I got to school.

KJL: There was a dog there that chased you?

VM: Yeah, when I'd go out in the woods.

KJL: And what was the dog's name?

VM: I don't know what's the dog's name. And I had long hair. She can tell anybody to pull on my hair and she wanted to see how long it is. I took it down. I put it back up when I (inaudible)

foster mom and dad. She could tell, and she said, “I want that girl to leave your hair like she puts it up. I said, “Yes, Mom.” and that’s it.

KJL: This was in the 1940’s, is that right?

VM: A long time ago, yeah. And these are all my caseworkers, Paige, Kendra, Martha, Sandra, Donna—caseworker, church friends (inaudible) friends (inaudible). And it’s got their names right there.

KJL: Paige, Martha, Sandra, Donna.

VM: And it says “caseworkers” on the bottom. Tom’s of Maine

KJL: You lived in Belfast for a while?

VM: Yeah.

KJL: Tell me about that.

VM: That’s the worst place you’ve ever been into. They want to—the ladies, and I told her no, forget about it. This person, their blood pressure goes up, I get blamed for it, and I (inaudible). That didn’t turn out.

KJL: That was a sheltered day program.

VM: Yes.

KJL: That was in the 1950’s—1960’s, excuse me.

VM: That was a sheltered place.

KJL: In Belfast?

VM: Yeah.

KJL: What was that like?

VM: We had two (inaudible) One was the boys, and the other one's the girls. And we couldn't —We'd go out and (Inaudible). We had to have somebody go with us. And they had the worst job. And when they (inaudible) he was a (inaudible) gonna use it, and I said, "Would you please put that away." He did it and I tried to get (inaudible) and they had the money. So I didn't get into it. He goes into the store and get the (inaudible) against them, the young kids. (Inaudible) and I got out and I went, moved in with Nina and take care of her kids. And I help her [take care of] Bruce, when the parents go on weekends and we get pay to work, stay with them. And I'd say, "'C'mon, now Bruce, we gotta go out," "No, no no. It's too cold." Again, when they put him to bed (inaudible) and we just put [him] right in the bed. And I said—And, one thing that—I was there when (inaudible) goes out. She had Earl, and I would just take Earl and I would feed him and I'd clean him up and everything. And we had that lady board with us that day and she get a (inaudible) right on his (inaudible). And I said "Cut that out!" I said "He can't help himself." and I said, "If I see you touch him again. I'm gonna turn around and kick you in your rear end. Cut it out!" And that's why I didn't like anybody that, you know that hurt anybody that, you know, when they can help themselves. You know what they called me? Bonehead!"

KJL: This was in Belfast.

VM: No that's in Saco, when I moved away from Belfast, living with those people.

KJL: Okay, you lived in Belfast and then Saco?

VM: I moved out of Belfast and I moved in with (inaudible) parents. Until (inaudible)

KJL: Okay, this is the Saco Valley Rehab Program.

VM: Yeah, that's where I go.

KJL: Okay, so you were at Pineland when? In the '70's

Aide: 1950.

KJL: Oh, you were at Pineland in the 1950's.

VM: Yeah.

KJL: And then you went to Belfast. Is that right?

VM: (Inaudible)

KJL: Tell me about your first day at Pineland, when you arrived.

VM: I went there when they made—

KJL: Do you remember when you arrived at Pineland?

VM: [I was] nineteen when I went to Pineland.

KJL: Do you remember what that was like when you arrived there?

VM: Terrible We don't get up when the roll is called, they put you in bed and tell to get up when the roll is called, and you go to the dentist, they was going to take the teeth out without freezing them. And ever since after that I'm afraid to go to the dentist. It wasn't a place you wanted [to have] been into.

KJL: They would take teeth out without using anesthetic, without using Novocaine?

VM: They're gonna take them out [without Novocaine]. They had one patient there that had to go to the dentist and he had to have somebody hold them down to take their teeth out, I tell you that's the worst—And now every time I go to the dentist, [I say], "No needles, no, no, no." And I (inaudible) needles (inaudible) would be. (Inaudible)

KJL: What did you do during the day at Pineland?

VM: I went to the school there and we had a teacher, she would run out (inaudible) and we could hear the footsteps when she would walk [when she was coming], And we would sit down

before she opened the door. We went there and they had parade, we were in the parade, and I (inaudible). And one of my friend that goes there, Ida (inaudible). She's one of my friends and I think [I had] chicken pox. And I had to go in a different room because I [couldn't be around] anybody. And Ida (inaudible) do something wrong and there's no room for her and she come in and [said] "Well, I have to sleep with the chickens!" And then we had Ken McKenzie came out and (inaudible) and we had (inaudible). Halloween they had mark on the windows and everything else and they made a place there that you could put your feet in and I said that's the worst—We had. I tell you, when they closed the place down and Paige Barton she is a wonderful person and she got (inaudible) that she closed Pineland down so the people could go out and see what the outside looks like [instead of being] treated like wild animals. When the parents don't want them, they put them right in there. They had a boy with a skinny body and a big head, you had to have two persons to change, turn him and I care about the place (inaudible) into. When I went down there to look at it and I said (inaudible) Howard and I and we had a day on there. And one of those ladies that works down there, lived there and she came, "Anybody [from] Pineland that wants a brick" I said, "Yes, give me three.

KJL: What...

VM Bricks down by the houses.

KJL: Oh, bricks

VM: Yeah. And one (inaudible) said to me that—water, bridge and I said, "(Inaudible) institution with them." Paige Barton and all the people in the (inaudible) and Bonney said she was crying. That's (inaudible) and now its no more Pineland whatsoever.

KJL: So you have three bricks from Pineland.

VM: Yes.

KJL: and what did you do with them?

VM: We went down to the bridge and we put them right in the water and I said, "Goodbye" Pineland!" And that's the worst place you've ever been into, I'll tell you. And when they (Inaudible) my brother (inaudible) the worst part that day—

KJL: Where did you stay at Pineland?

VM: Yarmouth Hall, then I went there and that's the worst place you've ever been into.

KJL: What was that like?

VM: Terrible! And they (inaudible). That's him right up there with the red shirt on. That's at Tom's of Maine where I worked. That's where I'd get on the bus...

KJL: You said you worked in the kitchen at Pineland. Is that right?

VM: Yes, I worked at the big kettles and I was filled with dope I was (inaudible) and I would hear (inaudible). and I was (inaudible) And when Paige closed that place down and I tell you, they give me the—somebody called Doris gave me a picture [in it]. Laura, could you bring the pictures out in the timeline.

Aide: The timeline's right there.

VM: Of Paige, up on the wall.

KJL: So what did you do in the kitchen?

VM: Pots and pans.

KJL: Washed them?

VM: And they do the dishes and everything.

KJL: Did you enjoy that job, or ...

VM: Yeah. And the pots. This is (inaudible) Paige, right here.

KJL: Paige was a friend of yours?

VM: Yes, and this is what she wrote, Paige.

KJL: That's nice.

VM: And she helped the people understand what they were going through.

KJL: Was Paige a resident at Pineland?

VM: No, she's not a resident at Pineland, no. She works (inaudible). What Paige is is she worked at Pineland or...

KJL: She worked at Pineland.

VM: Yes. She helped us out and if there was something we don't like, we could always say no. And she helped us close that place down, and she helped kids do the sign language. And I went to a statewide conference [in] Augusta and all the—Tom's of Maine and (inaudible).

KJL: When did you leave Pineland?

VM: When did I leave Pineland?

Aide: 1952

VM: 1952

KJL: Tell me about that. What happened there?

VM: Terrible.

KJL: Why did you leave Pineland in 1952?

VM: I went there and they were closed and everything and no more the memories or anything.

Aide: You moved to a group home.

VM: And they, people in the group home...

KJL: Tell me about the group home.

VM: Belfast, I didn't care about that.

KJL: That was in Belfast.

VM: Yes. Then I got out of there and I stayed with [Bruce's] parents I stayed there, with Bruce

KJL: And who was Bruce?

VM: Bruce (inaudible) patient (inaudible) parents.

KJL: What was your day like at the group home?

VM: Belfast?

KJL: (Affirmative).

VM: Bad. We couldn't go anybody to go out alone. We had somebody to go with us. And one of the—there we had—met with the guard there, he had—tried to get people to (inaudible) keep their money in. He was going to open them up and and I [told him] “No, that's wrong.” I said, “Put that away (inaudible)”

KJL: What did you tell him no for?

VM: They had a knife and I tried to open the strongbox, where they keep the money in. And I said, “Put it away(inaudible)” And I set there and we couldn't get anybody—they had somebody to go with you. And I—we ended up [at a] ball field, and I (inaudible) and told me, “Wait here.”) hold me right there and I said “Let go.” Ever since then I didn't trust him and he just pulled me right up against the table and one of the guys came up and (inaudible) beating up a girl. And they came out and they got (inaudible) And when I [was at the] day care in Belfast and I helped

with the kids and he came in—teachers came in and said [they had] company. I said, “How you get up here?” and (inaudible) and I went back down to the group home and they said, “You had company.” I said, “Yes.” They said “Why don’t you come down here and tell [us?]” I said, “You think I’m going to walk up) where the brick building and walk down here, group home? forget it.” And they had to come and get him in bed, and that was a place that I have been into. And I want to be close to my brother, there to him, and that was the worst place you ever been into.

KJL: At Pineland and at the group home did you have choices about how you spent your time?

VM: Our days were—what did you say?

KJL: At Pineland and at the group home did you have choices about how you spent your time, about what you did?

VM: I said I want to get away from that. I want to get out of Belfast—help of people. You know like I helped Bruce and (inaudible) like that. And when the people got (inaudible), that’s—let them have it.

KJL: How about what you ate? Did you choose what you ate?

VM: I’m not a big eater anyway, so [I] like something soft and—I’m not a big eater anyway, so I never did.

KJL: At the group home did anybody help you make decisions about money or about health care, things like that?

VM: I think so.

KJL: Pardon me?

VM: Yes.

KJL: How did that work?

VM: Okay, I guess.

KJL: Did you advocate for yourself sometimes? Did you work with people to get better conditions?

VM: Sometimes he comes in and I (inaudible) or something like that I get all [worked] up and everything and I worry about my brother and why they have to hit him and I (inaudible) miss him so much.

KJL: You mentioned a conference a while back. What was that about?

VM: Conference?

KJL: (Affirmative).

VM: I went to a conference at Sunday River—Paige Barton—and we had [Martha Rosen?]. She was in Pineland and her brother got her out. So Paige went to the conference. So one day—Paige (inaudible). Paige went up to our room and her roommate was gonna (inaudible) the bed. So she asked the (inaudible) [if] it's okay [if] she could have his room. And I—roommate's gonna start to bed. (inaudible) They started making a noise. They were jumping up and down on the bed and having a great time. Having a great time is what they had.

KJL: What was the conference about?

VM: Paige Barton (inaudible) Martha Rosen speak up for herself at conference (inaudible).

KJL: There were some awards?

VM: This is all a year ago. That's all (inaudible) Paige. Yeah, and the picture of Paige and (inaudible) and everything.

KJL: Let's put this down so it doesn't get broken.

VM: This is her when she—this is [Dixie?] when they help her. (Inaudible) and she work in the office in Augusta.

KJL: That's Paige Barton.

VM: Yeah, and she is the nicest friend that I [ever had].

KJL: How has life changed living in the community?

VM: Good, I help with the kids, I go help the teacher with the children. [That's] what I like. I worked in Belfast, I worked in Biddeford, Saco. When they come, the kids, I love 'em.

KJL: What kids are these?

VM: These are, you know, like when the parents bring their kids in the store and I was working the school with the kindergarten and I've done work at the (inaudible). And when the kid are (inaudible) what color their skin, I don't care.

KJL: You were helping take care of kids?

VM: I help the teacher.

KJL: You would help teach them.

VM: Yeah, I would help (inaudible) around the kids. We would take them outdoors and play with them and they had one here in Biddeford (inaudible). This was a boy and he couldn't even walk. (Inaudible) the name of (inaudible) and he (inaudible) the kindergarten kids. And I love 'em and (inaudible) the boy couldn't even walk. He'd walk when somebody hold on the hands, but one day he [was] walking by himself... And I said that—I said, "You can walk Lucas." And he walked. And I—one of the cooks in the kitchen, and I said, "Can I have a picture of Lucas?" She gave me a picture of him and I said, "You know what he calls me? Mother. Mother." (Inaudible) and I said I had that picture and the pretty little smile and I had [it put in] a frame and put it right on my bed with them other stuffed animals. And I said (inaudible). And I looked at him and his little smile and everything. Now you go to the school and nobody don't have any more Head Start program.

KJL: So this was at a Head Start program?

VM: Yes.

KJL: Okay, okay. So you enjoy that?

VM: Yeah, with the young kids I—and the one time I (inaudible) I [was] working in a—we had a diner in Biddeford and I was passing the coffee out, and one of the ladies with me—and the lady was sitting down and the kid was running around and I went up to her and I said, “Will you please make the kid sit down?” You know what she said, “Mind your business, they’re my kids!” If I burn any of those kids, I would have been locked up. And the lady with me she (inaudible) and I told her, “Don’t worry about it, you did the right thing.” She got mad and walked out.

KJL: So you worked at a diner?

VM: Yes.

KJL: Tell me more about that.

VM: Well, I worked in a diner and I helped pass the coffee out and when the guy that worked there send me over to get some milk, so I [brought] the milk back and when the kids, and they’d run around that’s [a problem]. She sat down and let her kids run around. I had the coffee in my hand, and I went over there and I said, “Would you please make the kids sit down?” She said, “Well, just mind your business, it’s my kids!” And I was upset. If I burn any of those kids I would get [fired] for it. And the lady with me, and she asked me, “What’s the matter?” “Don’t worry about it, you done the right thing.” And she got mad and walked out. That’s a good [thing] and I never seen them again after that.

KJL: Where was this, was it in Saco?

VM: In Biddeford.

KJL: In Biddeford, okay.

VM: And when it comes to kids, I don’t care what color the kids are. I don’t care. And when I go to the store and see these grandparents that bring the kids in, I said, “You have wonderful kids.” They say, “Oh, Thank you.” Even the little baby (inaudible) [in] the coffee shop. This

lady come with a baby, and I said, “Can I see the baby? They said, “Sure.” and I (inaudible) and when the baby (inaudible), I don’t care what the color of their skin or nothing.

KJL: Are you still working at the diner?

VM: No, not anymore. And I worked at Tom’s of Maine. I worked there when I was at (inaudible) down to the corner and take the bus and go to work. That’s Tom’s of Maine.

KJL: What did you do at Tom’s of Maine?

VM: (referring to photos) We had to package the floss and package the floss out to the homes. Anybody wants them they could—and that’s life long learning. (Inaudible) we do the cleaning and everything and that’s me with a white shirt on and in the back with the red shirt, that’s the boss that works with me and he —when we were working her in Biddeford (inaudible) Kennebunk and it was a shoe factory. I worked down there. So we would have a girl that her brother worked someplace else and we had to take her home. He wasn’t home until eight o’clock and that night we had to take her home and he couldn’t even tell that we go by and they had the horses and, “Oh, look at that! A dog!” I said “Those are not dogs, those are are horses.” He couldn’t tell the difference. He [made me] laugh. I said, “If he don’t behave himself, what I’ll do is put you right in the garbage can.” “Oh, yeah.” And he is (inaudible). And when we were having that workshop and I said, “Ron, can I ask you something?” He said, “Yes.” “(Inaudible) grandma.” I said, “I couldn’t even say happy birthday to my brother” (Inaudible) get to work. And he (inaudible) funny And we had a tea party with a picture taken and the people come in and I had a flower and they had the picture in—when they lady came and looked at the place and I [showed her the] picture. And she said, “What’s here, your boyfriend?” I said, “Nope. We are very good friends and that’s it.” And I said, “We’ve been friends for years.” He was a hairdresser and everything.

KJL: I’m not quite sure I understood what you do at Tom’s

VM: Tom’s of Maine, we do—package it like...

KJL: You helped package the items, is that right?

VM: Yeah.

KJL: Okay.

VM: [And then they would] send them out...

KJL: Do you enjoy that job?

VM: Yeah

KJL: Sounds like you do.

VM: And I did the cleaning and washed the floors and stuff like that.

KJL: How has having a disability affected your life?

VM: Ask (the aide)

Aide: Well, how has it affect your life? It's made it harder, right? It made your life a lot harder.

VM: Yeah, a little harder.

KJL: How so?

Aide: Well, you had to go to Pineland, that would have been hard on you, you had a lot of trauma.

VM: Yeah, (inaudible) the institution and—

Aide: And you don't eat all—you

KJL: What's the hardest thing you've ever had to do?

Aide: I can't answer these for you, honey, you have to—

VM: I would say [losing] my brother.

KJL: When you lost your brother?

VM: Yes: That's the hardest thing

KJL: Tell me about that.

VM: Well, in the boy's building and—he was nice and healthy and when they—when he was in the boy's building and they pick up a chair and throw it at him, paralyzed him. And when they did that (inaudible) I'd go crazy.

KJL: Your brother was at Pineland as well?

VM: Yes. Yeah, he went to the boys' building and we had visiting hours and when they pick up a chair and throw it at him, that's the worst part.

KJL: Was that one of the staff that threw it?

VM: A patient, anyone. I don't know who did it, and when they did that, they could lock me right up in the Augusta State Hospital. And I lost him, we was very, very, close when they'd let us get together.

KJL: What was your brother's name?

VM: Gerald

KJL: Gerald, okay.

VM: (Referring to photo) [And that's him].

KJL: Is that Gerald?

VM: Yeah, and that's me. This is it down here.

KJL: Is that you?

VM: Yeah. And this is me and this is my brother—and this is the house that we grow up in, right here.

KJL: Tell me about the house you grew up in.

VM: Nice place, we go to school and my foster parent is just like a real parent and I didn't know my real dad at all. Nobody did tell me. And when they [moved us there] they called them Mom and Dad ever since.

KJL: Now this was at Belfast?

VM: No, when I was living with them and I grow up when I was tiny.

KJL: Oh, in Washington.

VM: Yeah.

KJL: Okay. Have you been able to help others sometimes?

VM: I help (inaudible) watch for Bruce when they go out. I stay with him until they come back. And I used to take care of Earl. when they can't help themselves and I help him.

KJL: Now who is Earl?

VM: Earl is Bruce's brother.

KJL: Earl is your brother.

VM: A brother. Bruce's brother , Bruce had a brother, he passed away and Earl is gone, too. And Bruce lived in Lewiston and I go to visit him; visit him once in a while when somebody can stay with Sarah and I can go up and stay with, visit him, so...

KJL: What do you wish had been different?

VM: I don't know that I'd make it any different

KJL: What do you want most for yourself?

VM: Working with kids.

KJL: That's what you enjoy most, hmmm?

VM: Yes.

KJL: Why do you enjoy that so much?

VM: Because I like kids. Watching the news and see the parents got kids and they put them in the garbage can or leave the babies in the car and they go to the store and that's not for me, no.

KJL: You want to make sure they're taken care of.

VM: Yes. (Inaudible) abuse of kids. They had—put the baby in the (inaudible)—a real baby and the guy goes in there and takes the baby out takes them to the hospital. Who ever do a thing like that? Putting the baby in the garbage can, put it in the trash and the baby crying and guys that (inaudible) open—a baby, a real baby in it. Who would ever do that? That's not for me, no. When they turn on the news and they beat up the kids, I said, Turn that station.” I couldn't take it anymore.

KJL: I'm about finished with my questions here. Is there anything you want to point out to me that I might have overlooked?

VM: I don't think so.

KJL: Okay. Have you enjoyed this conversation?

VM: As long as it's helping the people that I went through. When I was in the (inaudible)—Doris and I and we went all over the United States—All over, telling my story—and they had a guy come in and interview me and I tell him all about—and they had at UNE that we need good doctors and nurses, that's what I did. That's what I've been doing. And when we (inaudible) — We went to have a shot, a flu shot and the guy was there and I said I was teaching at UNE and he was UNE and that's what I've been doing, teaching that so we have good doctors and nurses and that's what I've been doing.

KJL: And how have you been doing that?

VM: When Paige was (inaudible) anything you don't like, you said, "No," and you do like, you said, "Yes, so and that helped me an awful lot.

KJL: Okay. Well, I've really enjoyed talking with you.

VM: And that Paige—(referring to photo) this is Paige right there, on the—yellow for Paige. Right there.

KJL: (Affirmative) Now, this is Paige?

VM Yes.

KJL: That's nice.

VM: And there's (inaudible) right there. Read that right there.

KJL: The plaque?

VM: Yes

KJL: (Affirmative) (Quoting) “We need to pick up the torch that Paige left us to carry on her fight to give people with disabilities independence and to live a valued life without labels and putdowns. We need to keep the torch lit to light the way for others to follow in her footsteps, inspiring us never to give up on our dreams of a better life. Thank you Paige, for all you’ve done for us. We’ll carry you in memory always.” This is from the Community Partners, Vocational Services. So what’s your dream of a better life?

VM: I don’t know.

KJL: Okay, alright. Well thanks again for taking time for me. You’ve been very generous with your time.

END OF INTERVIEW

